

Community Development & Neighbourhood Centres: A Dialogue: Summary of Webinar One

Prepared for QFCA Community Development Sub-Committee By the Griffith University research team on behalf of the CD Practice Group July 2020

This is a short summary of the first of five webinars in which Queensland Neighbourhood and Community Centre (NCCs) explore Community Development (CD). A more complete documentation will be available soon.

Purpose of Webinar One: Provide a clear perspective on Community Development so that in subsequent conversations we are all discussing the same thing. “If we succeed, you will know by the end of the session what community development is, how it is different from other work we do in Centres, and whether you and your Centre do it or not”. The secondary purpose was to introduce the research with specific acknowledgement that the video-recording of the session would be available to all via the QFCA weblink. The overarching purpose of the five webinar sessions is for NCCs to collectively assess whether CD has contemporary relevance, whether it is part of their role, and what further infrastructure is needed to support that role.

The session began with welcome by QFCA and an overview of the session, followed by an introductory Breakout.

Breakout 1: What brought us here?

In the small group participants introduced themselves and identified the matters that brought them to the webinar. Their responses indicate significant interest in CD and a range of questions about how it can be stronger in NCCs within the current context and funding environment.

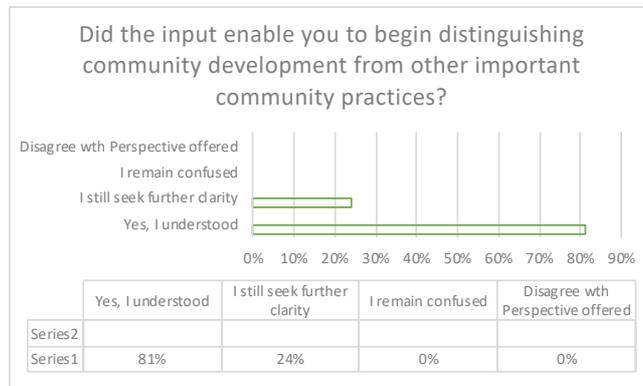
After an acknowledgment of the unique nature of NCCs and their relation to local area and people, the second breakout discussion sought to establish how the term ‘community development’ is currently used within Centres.

Breakout 2: What we do in our Practice or in our Centre that we call Community Development.

Participants identified what they and their Centre already do that they think of as community development. The full list will be provided in subsequent report, but in summary some Centres think of everything they do, including delivering services to the community as community development. Others recognise that CD pushes further towards working with community members on their own agendas, and there is a continuum in between, including community events, projects and interagency gatherings.

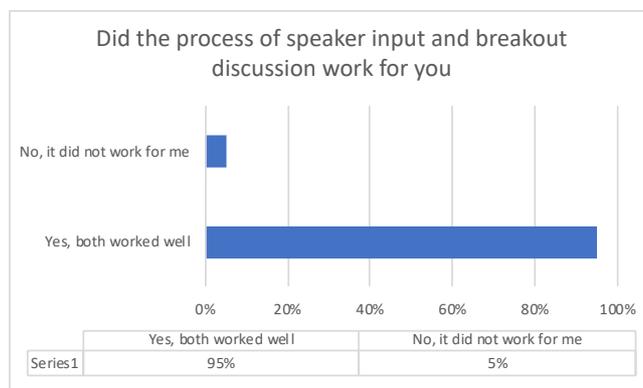
Poll 2, Question 1 Evaluation “Did the input enable you to distinguish CD from other important community practices?”

This poll happened at the end of the webinar and some people had apologised and left. 37 people responded with 35 people identifying that they understood. It was possible to choose more than one answer and 24 people identified they would like further clarity, with 22 people answering both questions, i.e. they understood, but would like further clarity.

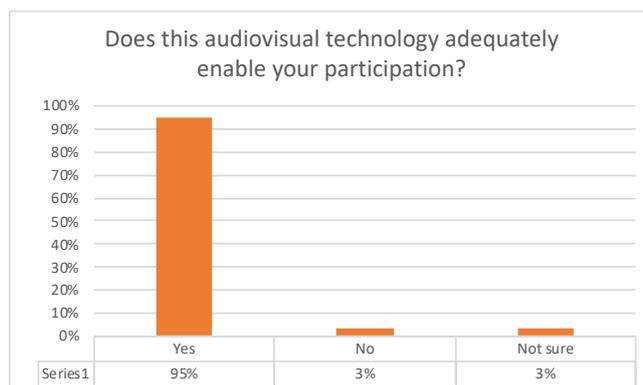


Poll 2, Question 2 Evaluation

The second evaluation question sought feedback as to whether the process of Speaker Input followed by Breakout Discussion worked well for participants. 95% of participants (35/37) said that both worked well. 2 participants found it did not work for them.



Finally, feedback was requested as to whether this audiovisual technology (i.e. zoom) adequately enabled participation. Again 95% (35/37) said *yes*, 1% (1 person) said *No* and 1% said *Not sure*.



Conclusion

Approximately one third of Neighbourhood and Community centres participated from various sites across Queensland. Overall they considered that community development, understood as supporting local people to work together to progress their own matters, is important, may still have relevance, and for many Centres has been lost from practice. Major constraints are perceived, such as the daily rush to meet the needs of people in crisis, that most organisations are not well set up for CD understood in this way, that funding and reporting processes do not facilitate it, that opportunities for education and professional development in it are limited. Nevertheless, there is significant interest in exploring the practice further.

In terms of feedback to influence the next four webinar sessions, participants identified that they would like recent stories relevant to NCCs, ways of addressing the barriers and constraints, and better understandings of the actual practices, as well as to make breakout sessions longer and to keep the same group in Breakouts.

The majority of participants reported that they found the session helpful and the technology facilitative. The full documentation of the first webinar will be made available very soon and the video-recording can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSrf5-LybcI&feature=youtu.be>

In terms of distribution of webinar notes and resources, the webinar facilitators will make them available to all participating Centres in the week following the webinar. The final report, summarising the five webinars will go to the QFCA sub committee and Board before being made public.

The next webinar is on Wednesday 12th August. QFCA will send out links and registration details very soon.
